

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FAO, UNDP, EAGR, AORG

SUBJECT: UNDP'S VIEWS ON A SEPARATE, INDEPENDENTLY

FINANCED FAO FIELD PROGRAM OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION

REF: USUN 954

1. QUOTED BELOW AS PARAGRAPH 3 OF THIS CABLE ARE THE VIEWS OF UNDP ADMINISTRATOR MORSE AND HIS SENIOR STAFF ON FAO DG SAOUMA'S RECENT PROPOSAL TO CREATE AN FAO-FINANCED OPERATIONS FUND FOR SOME FIELD PROGRAMS AND HIS PLANS TO PUT IN TRAIN OTHER FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMING MEASURES THAT WOULD SERVE TO MAKE FAO FIELD PROGRAMS MORE AUTONOMOUS OF UNDP AND ITS COUNTRY PROGRAMMING PROCESSES THAN HERETOFORE HAS BEEN THE CASE.

2. THE UNDP PAPER QUOTED AS PARAGRAPH THREE WAS GIVEN TO MINCOUN KITCHEN BY MORSE ON 15 MARCH WITH THE INJUNCTION THAT ITS CONTENTS WERE SENSITIVE AND MUST BE TREATED BY THE U.S. WITH GREAT DISCRETION. MORSE ADDED THAT HE INTENDED TO HAVE THE SAOUMA INITIATIVES THOROUGHLY EXAMINED AT
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THE UPCOMING ASYG'S ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDI-

NATION (ACC) LATER THIS MONTH. KITCHEN THANKED MORSE FOR THE PAPER, ASSURED HIM IT WOULD BE CAREFULLY STUDIED AND PROPERLY PROTECTED. KITCHEN ALSO TOLD MORSE US VIEWS ON THE SAME SAOUMA PROPOSALS--THAT WE HAD PROMISED TO CONVEY TO SAOUMA IN THE NEAR FUTURE--WERE STILL IN THE FORMULATION STAGE.

3. QUOTE IMPLICATIONS OF A SEPARATE, INDEPENDENTLY FINANCED
FAO PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION

A. AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

1. A SEPARATE FAO PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION (PRE-SUMABLY ADMINISTERED BY AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE, AS IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE INTENTION) WOULD SIGNIFY THE RETURN TO A FRAGMENTED APPROACH BY THE UN SYSTEM AND HENCE THE NEGATION OF THE "ONE VOICE" PRINCIPLE. FAO WOULD BE SPEAKING FOR ITSELF ALONE AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT OTHER SPECIALIZED AGENCIES WOULD WISH TO FOLLOW SUIT. THIS WOULD IN FACT MEAN PUTTING THE CLOCK BACK 20 YEARS TO THE SITUATION PREVAILING AT THE TIME THAT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BOARD BEGAN ITS OPERATIONS AND THE REVERSAL OF THE MANY INTERVENING YEARS OF EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A CONSOLIDATED AND HARMONIOUS APPROACH. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT RUNS DIRECTLY COUNTER TO THE MAIN THEMES OF THE CURRENT RESTRUCTURING PROPOSALS, ALL OF WHICH LAY EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR CLOSER INTEGRATION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF THE SYSTEM.

2. AT A TIME WHEN ALL CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPMENT ARE INCREAS-
INGLY URGING THE NEED FOR AN INTEGRAL, MULTI-DISCIPLINARY
APPROACH, AGRICULTURE WOULD BE "GOING IT ALONE". EVEN
PROBLEMS OF FOOD PRODUCTION AND RURAL EMPLOYMENT EMBRACE
MUCH WIDER CONSIDERATIONS THAN AGRICULTURE ALONE.

3. THE RETURN TO A SECTORAL APPROACH WOULD ALSO HAVE A
NEGATIVE EFFECT ON COORDINATION MECHANISMS IN RECIPIENT COUN-
TRIES FOR THE HANDLING OF EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.
ONE OF THE (OFTEN UNRECOGNIZED) ACHIEVEMENTS OF UNDP AND
ITS PREDECESSOR ORGANIZATIONS HAS BEEN TO BUILD UP AND
CONSOLIDATE SUCH ARRANGEMENTS, USUALLY CENTERED IN A MINISTRY
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OF ECONOMIC PLANNING, WHICH BECOMES THE NATURAL COUNTERPART
OF THE UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE AND HIS STAFF,
MAINTAINING THE SAME BALANCE BETWEEN SECTORAL INTERESTS IN
THE GOVERNMENT AS THE UNDP OFFICE DOES BETWEEN THE SPECIALIZED
AGENCIES. A PROGRAMME EXCLUSIVELY FINANCED BY FAO WOULD
OBVIOUSLY INCREASE THE LINKS BETWEEN FAO AND THE MINIS-
TRY OF AGRICULTURE, AND SO COMPLICATE THE TASK OF THE CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES FOR PLANNING DEVELOPMENT.

4. THE LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE - AND THIS IS PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT OF ALL - WOULD BE THE NEGATION OF THE "COUNTRY CENTRED" APPROACH WHICH IS THE CENTRAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE CONSENSUS, AND HENCE THE WEAKENING OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMMING PROCESS WHICH WE ARE STILL DEVELOPING.

B. AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

1. THIS WOULD BE ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE PROLIFERATION OF FUNDS WHICH MOST GOVERNMENTS DEPLORE AND WHICH WAS ONE OF THE MAIN SUBJECTS OF CONCERN IN THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF 25 EXPERTS ON RESTRUCTURING.

2. IT WOULD SIGNIFY A REVERSION OF THE "DONOR-ORIENTED" APPROACH:

(A) ON THE PART OF THE "DONOR" COUNTRIES BECAUSE, BY MAKING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS THEY WOULD IN FACT BE DECIDING WHAT PROPORTION OF THE OVERALL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION SHOULD GO TO AGRICULTURE;

(B) ON THE PART OF FAO WHICH WOULD, BY THE DISTRIBUTION OF THESE FUNDS BETWEEN COUNTRIES, DECIDE HOW MUCH SHOULD BE SPENT ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE IN EACH CASE.

THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF THE ADVERSE EFFECT ON COUNTRY PROGRAMMES.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS

1. THE ARGUMENT THAT A SEPARATE PROGRAMME FOR FAO WOULD OBTAIN UNDP AS A COSTLY INTERMEDIARY IS AN ATTRACTIVE ONE BUT ALMOST CERTAINLY SPURIOUS:

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(A) UNDP WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST;

(B) UNDP HAS BUILT UP OVER THE YEARS AN INTERNATIONAL FIELD SERVICE THAT IS UNIQUE AND WHICH COVERS THE WHOLE UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM;

(C) TO MANAGE AN INDEPENDENT PROGRAMME OF ANY SIZE, FAO WILL HAVE TO BUILD UP A FIELD SERVICE AS WELL AND THIS IS UNLIKELY TO STOP AT ONE FAO COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE REPLACING THE FORMER SENIOR AGRICULTURAL ADVISER IN THE UNDP OFFICE. BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN TIME AND AGAIN THAT THE CREATION OF SUCH PARALLEL SERVICES IS BOTH COSTLY AND INEFFICIENT.

2. FAO IS A VERY HEADQUARTERS-ORIENTED ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS ALWAYS SHOWN STRONG CENTRALIST TENDENCIES. ALTHOUGH IT HAS A NETWORK OF REGIONAL OFFICES, LITTLE AUTHORITY HAS BEEN

DELEGATED TO THEM. PRONOUNCEMENTS MADE SO FAR CONTAIN LITTLE
INDICATION OF ANY CHANGE IN THIS PHILOSOPHY. THIS CONFIRMS:

(A) THAT THE CREATION OF A FIELD NETWORK BY FAO WOULD
INCREASE EXPENSES, SINCE IT IS UNLIKELY TO BE ACCOMPANIED
BY ANY REDEPLOYMENT FROM HEADQUARTERS;

(B) THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON "THE COUNTRY CENTRED"
APPROACH AND ON COUNTRY PROGRAMMING SINCE THERE WOULD BE A
DEFINITE TENDENCY TO DICTATE AGRICULTURAL POLICIES FROM
THE CENTRE RATHER THAN TO BUILD THEM UP FROM THE GROUND.

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